



Press Release

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HOMELAND SECURITY FIRST TO DEFINE INTEROPERABILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR NATION'S FIRST RESPONDER COMMUNITY

"Statement of Requirements" Outlines Future Public Safety Wireless Communications and Interoperability

Washington, D.C.- The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Science and Technology Directorate today announced the release of the first comprehensive Statement of Requirements (SoR) document outlining future technology requirements for public safety wireless communications and interoperability. The SoR can be found at www.safecomprogram.gov.

The SoR, developed under the SAFECOM Program, marks the first time the 50,000 public safety agencies have a document that defines future requirements for communicating and sharing information -- as authorized, when and where needed, and in a manner that allows for the most effective use of that information.

"On behalf of Secretary Ridge, we are pleased that the Department has undertaken this unprecedented step toward defining the nation's interoperability challenges for the future," said Dr. Charles McQueary, Under Secretary, Science and Technology. "This approach not only complements the grant guidance we have in place but also provides a roadmap for our interoperability goals and brings government and public safety officials together under a common mission."

The SoR provides the public safety community with a shared vision and describes how first responders can use in-the-field information resources more efficiently when responding to a variety of emergency events. The SoR's other purposes are to encourage the communications industry to better align its research and development efforts with public safety needs and to identify public safety operational issues when discussions regarding laws and regulations take place.

"The Statement of Requirements is a critical document that will provide first responders with the architectural framework for future interoperable public safety communications,"

said Dr. David Boyd, Director, SAFECOM. "As we proceed, the needs of the user community will help drive the development of various communications products that allow the nation to begin to reach a functional level of interoperability."

The SoR was developed in coordination with the National Public Safety Telecommunications Council, the National Institute of Standards and Technology, and the Department of Justice's Advanced Generation of Interoperability for Law Enforcement or AGILE Program. The requirements contain interoperability scenarios that range from law enforcement traffic stops to large-scale cross jurisdictional responses describing how technology can serve to enhance public safety in a variety of situations. The operational scenarios provide requirements that define how technology should function in the field, drive technology interface standards, define user's needs in the development of new technologies, and provide a guide for research and development, testing, and evaluation programs.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Science and Technology Directorate serves as the primary research and development arm of the Department, utilizing our nation's scientific and technological resources to provide federal, state and local officials with the technology and capabilities to protect the homeland. SAFECOM was established in 2002 as part of the President's Management Agenda that oversees all initiatives and projects pertaining to public safety communications and interoperability. It is the overarching umbrella program within the Federal government to help local, tribal, State and Federal public safety agencies improve public safety response through more effective and efficient interoperable wireless communications. For more information about the SAFECOM Program, contact safecom@dhs.gov or call 866-969-SAFE.

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